

What every residential rental property owner should know.

As a Kochville Township residential property owner, you are part of a township that values a strong sense of community yet a connection and desire to maintain a tranquil and rural character of which Kochville has always been. To promote these values, the Township must strive to enforce a certain standard for property maintenance and maintain property values. In turn, property owners are responsible for doing their part to keep their property in a condition that reflects favorably on the community.



Rental Registration

Owners of residential rental properties are required to register such properties within 45 days of purchase or inception. Registrations are required to be renewed every two years. There are fees associated with timely registration and an increase in fees for failure to register your property. If the living unit is not occupied by the property owner, it is considered a rental unit, even if occupied by a relative.

Structure and Yard Maintenance

Property Owners are responsible for maintaining their structures and yard. The Township's Code of Ordinances, including the International Property Maintenance Code provides property maintenance standards and enforcement provisions. The ordinances regulate the condition of the exterior and interior of the structures and yards. The ordinance prohibits long grass over 10 inches in height and noxious weeds, accumulation of garbage, trash, junk, debris, junk vehicles, etc.



Garbage Storage/Collection

The Township requires that trash not be stored in such a way that rodents and other animals cannot scatter debris or allow it to be blown all over the yard. Trash pickup in Kochville is on Mondays, except when it falls on a holiday, in which case it is the following day. Trash may not be placed out for pickup sooner than 12 hours prior to scheduled pickup time. Waste Management limits the size of trash containers to 32 gallon capacity and cannot exceed 50 pounds. For information about pickup of large items, you can call **Waste Management** at 989-781-9555. Structures with 3 or fewer dwelling units are covered under the Township's agreement with Waste Management for residential garbage collection. Structures with 4 or more units are not regulated by the Township's contract and would require a dumpster and dumpster enclosure.

Junk & Debris Accumulation



All exterior property must be kept free from accumulating junk & rubbish – including but not limited to discarded appliances, furniture, household items, automotive parts, tires, building materials, yard waste brush, etc.



Junk and Unlicensed Vehicles

Vehicles meeting the Township’s definition of a junk vehicle are not allowed to be stored on any property unless such vehicle is kept inside an enclosed structure. A junk vehicle is described as “Any vehicle which is not licensed for use upon the highways of the state for a period in excess of 60 days, and shall also include, whether licensed or not, any motor vehicle which is inoperative for any reason for a period in excess of 60 days”.

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide (CO) Detectors

All homes are required to have smoke detectors in each sleeping area, in the hallway outside of a sleeping area and on each level of the structure. On newer construction and when improvements including alterations, additions, are made, the code requires that smoke detectors must be installed to the most current code, which means that a direct wired “interconnected” smoke alarm system must be installed. Where smoke detectors are battery operated, batteries should be changed regularly every 6 months, whether they are “chirping” or not. Carbon Monoxide is a silent killer. Carbon Monoxide is a dangerous odorless gas emitted from the combustion of fossil fuels, which includes natural gas fireplaces, furnaces, and improperly vented hot water tanks. A cracked heat exchanger or blocked chimney vent, on a furnace could result in dangerous levels of CO gas being released into the home. A furnace installation/servicing contractor can usually check the furnace for such a condition and it is highly recommended to have this done at the beginning of each heating season. In new construction a CO detector is required. Furnaces found emitting Carbon Monoxide **MUST BE SHUT DOWN IMMEDIATELY** until the furnace is repaired.



Egress Requirements



The Michigan Residential Code requires that all sleeping areas must have a window with a clear opening width of not less than 20 inches and a minimum size of 5.7 square feet. In sleeping areas located on the grade floor a minimum net clear opening of 5 square feet is required. In a basement, the egress opening cannot exceed 44 inches from the sill to the floor. Egress wells must provide an escape route from the structure in an emergency, such as steps or a ladder, so a person could climb out.

Sleeping Areas in Basements and Attics



The Michigan Building Code and International Property Maintenance Code sets minimum area sizes and clear ceiling heights and means of egress requirements for sleeping areas to ensure safety of the occupants. Bedrooms located in basements must have a minimum clear ceiling height of 7 feet. Minimum sleeping area is 70 square feet with one side no less than 7 feet. For 2 people in a sleeping area, this area is increased by 50 square feet for a minimum area of 120 square feet, and increases in minimum area by 50 square feet for each additional occupant. Attic sleeping areas where knee walls are part of the room, the knee wall from floor to ceiling must be at least 5 feet to be included in the minimum required area. In addition, the ceiling area in an attic must be 7 feet of clear ceiling height for at least 1/3 of the minimum room area. Both attic and basement areas must meet egress requirements as stated above.

Housing Complaints

When the Code Enforcement Department receives a housing complaint from a tenant who has control of an apartment or single family dwelling, the complaint is required to be in writing and specific problems must be listed on the complaint. A rental inspection is then conducted in the area a tenant has control of inside the structure and on the exterior of the structure and all violations noted by staff is cited. The rental property owner is sent a notice by certified mail of any conditions found that are contrary to the International Property Maintenance Code and given the opportunity to repair or correct the conditions within a given time frame.



Penalties & Fees

Penalties of enforcement issues are specified in the Kochville Township Code of Ordinances. A complaint driven inspection will result in a fee being charged as an additional charge and additional inspections will result in additional inspection fees.



Often, code violations involving rental property are caused directly by the tenant, but the property owner is held responsible for most conditions at the property. Typically, there is some form of contractual agreement between the property owner and the tenant for the upkeep of the property. Even though an agreement may exist, the code enforcement department is not party to such agreements and the owner is still responsible for the property. A “Landlord and Tenant Guide” is available online and may provide some guidance, as could a legal professional.

Water and Sewer Accounts

The Township will establish a water account with either the tenant or the landlord, but if water is shut off for non-payment, the unpaid balance and a \$100.00 charge (to turn water back on) will be charged and water will not be turned back on until the entire account is paid in full.

Fences, Sheds and property improvements

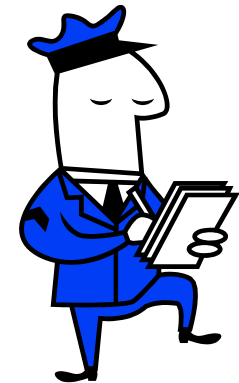


The Township has a zoning ordinance which regulates the locations of fences, sheds, garages, and other physical improvements. The Township requires zoning permits for these improvements prior to the work to ensure the required setbacks are complied with. Contact the Code Enforcement Department at 989-792-7596 extension 117 with any questions regarding the required permit.

The registration of rental housing is required by Kochville Township and provides the necessary emergency contact information as well as occupancy status of properties located in the township. The Township allows the property owner to “self-certify” that their property is in compliance with the International Property Maintenance Code and other applicable building codes to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the occupants of the dwelling. By signing the registration/certification form, the owner is stating that

he/she has inspected and addressed any items requiring attention and that the home is presumed to be safely habitable for the tenants. The preceding information is not a complete list of code requirements. Maintaining the safety of occupants of any structure is the intent of all codes and the Rental Registration Ordinance of Kochville Township is in place to ensure that landlords maintain their properties to that end. The Township highly recommends that a professional home inspector inspect the rental unit to ensure compliance, but will not require it.

Inspections that are made by inspectors are “complaint driven”. A housing inspector will not automatically come knocking on your door demanding an inspection when the home is registered. If a complaint is received by a tenant that requires an inspection, the inspector will notify the property owner by phone or 1st class mail to setup an inspection time. If the complaint is one of an emergency nature, and the property owner had been notified and failed to correct the problem, the inspector can make the inspection without prior notice. Where an inspection verifies the code violation, an inspection fee will be charged to the property owner. We understand that not all tenant complaints may be code violations. If that is the case and a complaint is unfounded, no inspection fee would be charged. The Township also has a Code Enforcement Officer who routinely patrols the township and notes property maintenance violations. If a violation is found, property owners receive notices to correct a violation. This does not occur just because the home is a rental unit.



If you have any questions about the rental registration requirement and code related questions, you may call the Code Enforcement Department at 989-792-7596 extension 117.



5851 Mackinaw Rd.
Saginaw, MI 48604